

5 We claim:

1. An apparatus for creating an audit trail for an application program, wherein the application program defines one or more business components and is executable on an application server, the apparatus comprising:

means for selecting:

10 the business components to be audited from the one or more business components; and

one or more operations to be audited;

wherein the means for selecting the business components to be audited and the operations to be audited is included in the application program.

15 2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the application program further comprises:

means for detecting when the selected operations are performed.

3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the application program further comprises:

20 means for generating an audit transaction record regarding the business component when the selected operations are detected.

4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the operations include at least one of: update, add, copy, and delete.

25 5. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising means for restricting access to the audit trail by at least one of: an employee identifier, an employment position, and an area of responsibility.

6. The apparatus of claim 3, further comprising means for storing the audit transaction record in an external database.

30 7. The apparatus of claim 3, further comprising means for storing the audit transaction record in a file.

5 8. The apparatus of claim 7, further comprising means for importing the audit transaction record stored in the file to a database.

 9. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the audit transaction record includes at least one of: an identifier for the entity that accessed the business component, the operation that was performed on the business component, when the operation was
10 performed, and how the value of at least a portion of the business component was changed.

 10. The apparatus of claim 3, further comprising means for querying one or more of the audit transaction records.

 11. The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising means for prompting the user
15 to enter a comment when the selected operations are detected.

 12. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the one or more business components comprise one or more fields, and further comprising:

 means for selecting the one or more fields to be audited; and

 means for generating an audit transaction record when one of the selected
20 operations on one of the selected fields is detected.

 13. The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising means for restoring the one or more of the fields to a previous state.

 14. A system for creating an audit trail in an information system, comprising:
an application program comprising:

25 at least one business component, wherein each business component includes one or more fields;

 a user interface operable to allow a user to select:

 one or more of the fields, and

 one or more operations to be audited on one or more of the
30 selected fields;

- 5 a set of instructions operable to detect when the selected operations are
 performed on the selected fields; and
 a set of instructions operable to generate an audit transaction record
 regarding one or more of the selected fields when the selected
 operations are detected.

10 15. The system of claim 14, wherein the operations on the one or more fields
to be audited include at least one of: update, add, copy, and delete.

 16. The system of claim 14, wherein the user interface is further operable to
allow the user to restrict access to the audit trail by at least one of: an employee identifier,
an employment position, and an area of responsibility.

15 17. The system of claim 14, wherein the audit transaction record is stored in
a database.

 18. The system of claim 14, wherein the audit transaction record is stored in
a file.

20 19. The system of claim 18, further comprising instructions operable to import
the audit transaction record stored in the file to a database.

 20. The system of claim 14, wherein the audit transaction record includes at
least one of: an identifier for the entity that accessed the field, the operation that was
performed, when the operation was performed, and a previous value of the field, and a
current value of the field.

25 21. The system of claim 14, further comprising instructions to allow the user
to query one or more of the audit transaction records.

 22. The system of claim 14, further comprising instructions to allow the user
to restore one or more of the selected fields to a previous value.

5 23. The system of claim 14, further comprising instructions to prompt the user to enter a description of the operation when the selected operations are detected.

 24. A method for creating an audit trail in an information system, the method comprising:

 performing audit trail functions in an application program including:

10 generating a list of business components included in the application program;

 presenting the list of business components to a user;

 allowing the user to select one or more of the business components to be audited;

15 presenting a list of operations that can be performed on the business components to the user;

 allowing the user to select one or more of the operations to be audited for the selected business components.

20 25. The method of claim 24, wherein the operations include at least one of: update, add, copy, and delete.

 26. The method of claim 24, further comprising restricting access to the audit trail by at least one of: an employee identifier, an employment position, and an area of responsibility.

25 27. The method of claim 24, further comprising:

 detecting when the selected operations are performed on one of the selected business components; and

 generating an audit transaction record when the selected operations are detected.

 28. The method of claim 27, further comprising storing the audit transaction record in a database.

30 29. The method of claim 27, further comprising storing the audit transaction record in a file.

5 30. The method of claim 29, further comprising importing the audit transaction record stored in the file to a database.

 31. The method of claim 27, wherein the audit transaction record includes at least one of: an identifier for the entity that accessed the business component, the operation that was performed on the business component, when the operation was
10 performed, and how the value of at least a portion of the business component was changed.

 32. The method of claim 27, further comprising querying one or more of the audit transaction records.

 33. The method of claim 27, further comprising prompting the user to enter a
15 description of the operation when the selected operations are detected.

 34. The method of claim 24, wherein the one or more business components comprise one or more fields, and further comprising:

 selecting the fields to be audited; and

 generating an audit transaction record when the selected operations on the selected
20 fields are detected.

 35. The method of claim 34, further comprising restoring one or more of the selected fields to a previous value.

 36. A computer program product comprising:
instructions for implementing the method of claim 24.

25 37. A data signal comprising:
instructions for implementing the method of claim 24.